



Influence and the Advising Mission: An Analysis of Proactive Influence and Impression Management Strategies

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Military Advisor Mission



- Military advisors play a critical role in the U.S. exit strategy from Iraq and Afghanistan
- Advisors are responsible for assisting and advising their Iraqi and Afghanistan counterparts (CP) on how to create professional military and police forces
- Transition teams typically consist of 10-15 military personnel and live alongside their counterparts
- In Iraq alone, over 6,000 transition team advisors were responsible for preparing 347,000 Iraqis to be self-sustaining military and police forces
 - *Stand up and be counted: The continuing challenge of building the Iraqi Security Forces* (2007). Report of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. House Subcommittee Report No. ADA469528.



ARI Collaboration with JCISFA



- Conducted a survey of returning transition team members to determine the interpersonal, linguistic, cross-cultural, and advisory behaviors demonstrated as part of the advisor role
- Survey included 151 behaviors and was modeled after a task analysis

Frequency Ratings

- 0—Did not perform
- 1—A few times
- 2—Once a month
- 3—Once a week
- 4—Once a day
- 5—More than once a day

Importance Ratings

- 0—None
- 1—Little importance
- 2—Some importance
- 3—Moderately important
- 4—Very important
- 5—Extremely important

JCISFA = Joint Center for International Security Force Assistance



Advisors and Influence



- Several items targeted different strategies advisors might use to influence their counterparts
- Advisors have no command authority over their counterparts (Kranc, 2007)
 - How to influence without relying on traditional means of military influence (i.e., rank)?
 - How to influence individuals from another culture?
- Potential influence strategies (Yukl, Seifert, & Chavez, 2008)
 - Proactive tactics: Enlist an individual to achieve a specific objective
 - Impression management: Shape an individual's beliefs about one's skills and capabilities



Research Questions



- What influence tactics do advisors view as most important to their effectiveness?
 - Does this differ between Iraq and Afghanistan?
- How do relationship building activities and the use of cultural knowledge relate to the use of impression management?
- How do relationship building activities and the use of cultural knowledge relate to the use of proactive tactics?
- Do advisors who report having counterparts willing to listen to their advice use impression management and proactive tactics with different frequency than advisors who report having counterparts unwilling to listen to their advice?



Sample



- $N = 517$ US military personnel
 - 438 Army
 - 69 Marines
 - 7 Navy
- 307 deployed to Iraq, 203 deployed to Afghanistan
 - 7 did not report
- Mix of Active, Reserve, and Guard
- Mix of NCO and officer ranks
 - Largest frequencies for CPT ($n = 130$), SFC ($n = 127$), and SSG ($n = 74$), MAJ ($n = 68$)
- Mix of team member positions (e.g., Team Chief, Logistics, Intelligence)
- Mix of team types (e.g., Military Combat Arms, Border, Military Combat Service Support, Police)



Measures



Impression Management

- Role Modeling (3 items, $\alpha = .85$ freq rating, $\alpha = .87$ imp rating)
 - Example: Exhibit a strong work ethic
- Positive Promotion (5 items, $\alpha = .82$ freq rating, $\alpha = .83$ imp rating)
 - Example: Establish your credibility with your counterpart
 - Example: Influence how your counterpart perceives you

Proactive Tactics

- Rational Persuasion (2 items, $\alpha = .68$ freq rating, $\alpha = .66$ imp rating)
 - Example: Use rational persuasion (i.e., provide logical arguments and evidence) to influence your counterpart
- Soft Tactics (4 items, $\alpha = .80$ freq rating, $\alpha = .78$ imp rating)
 - Example: Appeal to the emotions of your counterpart (i.e., engage in inspirational tactics) to influence him
- Hard Tactics (3 items, $\alpha = .71$ freq rating, $\alpha = .67$ imp rating)
 - Example: Apply pressure tactics as a way to influence your counterpart



Measures Continued



Relationship Building (10 items, $\alpha = .89$ freq rating)

- Example: Communicate to your counterpart that you respect him

Applying Cultural Knowledge (10 items, $\alpha = .87$ freq rating)

- Example: Take advantage of the social hierarchy of the relevant culture
- Example: Recognize differences between Western culture and your counterpart's culture

Counterpart Receptivity (14 items, $\alpha = .86$)

- Advisors indicated whether they believed their counterparts were receptive to their advice and influence
- Part of the job is to figure out how to get counterparts to follow advice
- Example: My Host Nation counterpart was difficult to influence
- Scale added after data collection was underway ($N = 456$)



Control Variable



- Most advisors spend significant time interacting with their counterparts (daily to weekly)
- How much time is spent interacting with counterparts depends on a variety of factors (e.g., mission requirements, geographic dispersal, counterpart needs)
- More time interacting with counterparts allows for more opportunities to exert influence, build relationships, and apply cultural skills and knowledge
- Analyses reported in this presentation control for how much time advisors reported interacting with their counterparts to examine effects while holding frequency of interaction constant



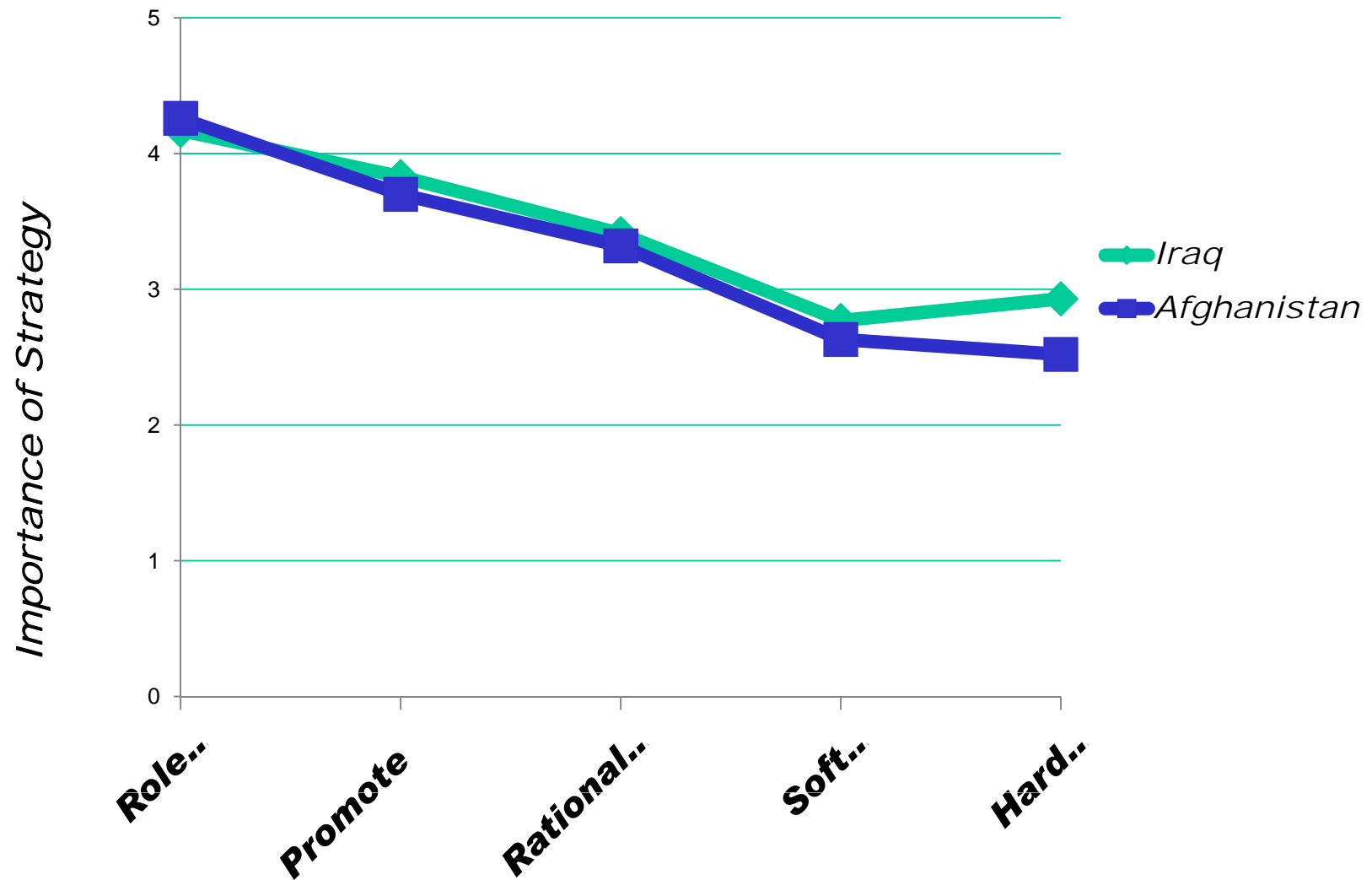
Importance of Influence Strategies



- Profile analysis was used to examine the pattern of importance ratings for the different influence strategies by country of deployment
- Profile analysis is conducted in a MANOVA framework to allow for inferential tests of interaction and main effects (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996)
 - Treats influence strategy as a within subjects variable and country of deployment as a between subjects variable
- The profile analysis indicated an interaction between country of deployment and importance of the influence strategy, $F(4, 504) = 4.72$, $p < .001$
 - Wilks Lambda was used as the criterion



Importance of Influence Strategies





Importance of Strategies



- Advisors view impression management strategies as more important to their effectiveness than proactive tactics
- Role modeling was the most important strategy
 - Followed by promotion
- Rational persuasion was the most important of the proactive tactics
- Soft and hard tactics can still be important tools for advisors
 - $M = 2.71$ and 2.76 , respectively
 - Rating of 3 = moderately important
- Slightly more emphasis on hard tactics in Iraq than Afghanistan
 - Note: May reflect the differing team types/missions in the country as opposed to cultural/country differences



Predicting Impression Management



- Advisors indicated that impression management strategies were important for effectiveness
- How do relationship building activities and applying cultural knowledge relate to impression management activities?
 - It would seem that advisors who engage in impression management would need to draw on both interpersonal skill and cultural knowledge
- Hierarchical regression was used to examine whether relationship building and the use of cultural knowledge predicted the occurrence of impression management
- An impression management scale was computed by converting the role modeling and promotion scales to z-scores and calculating the mean



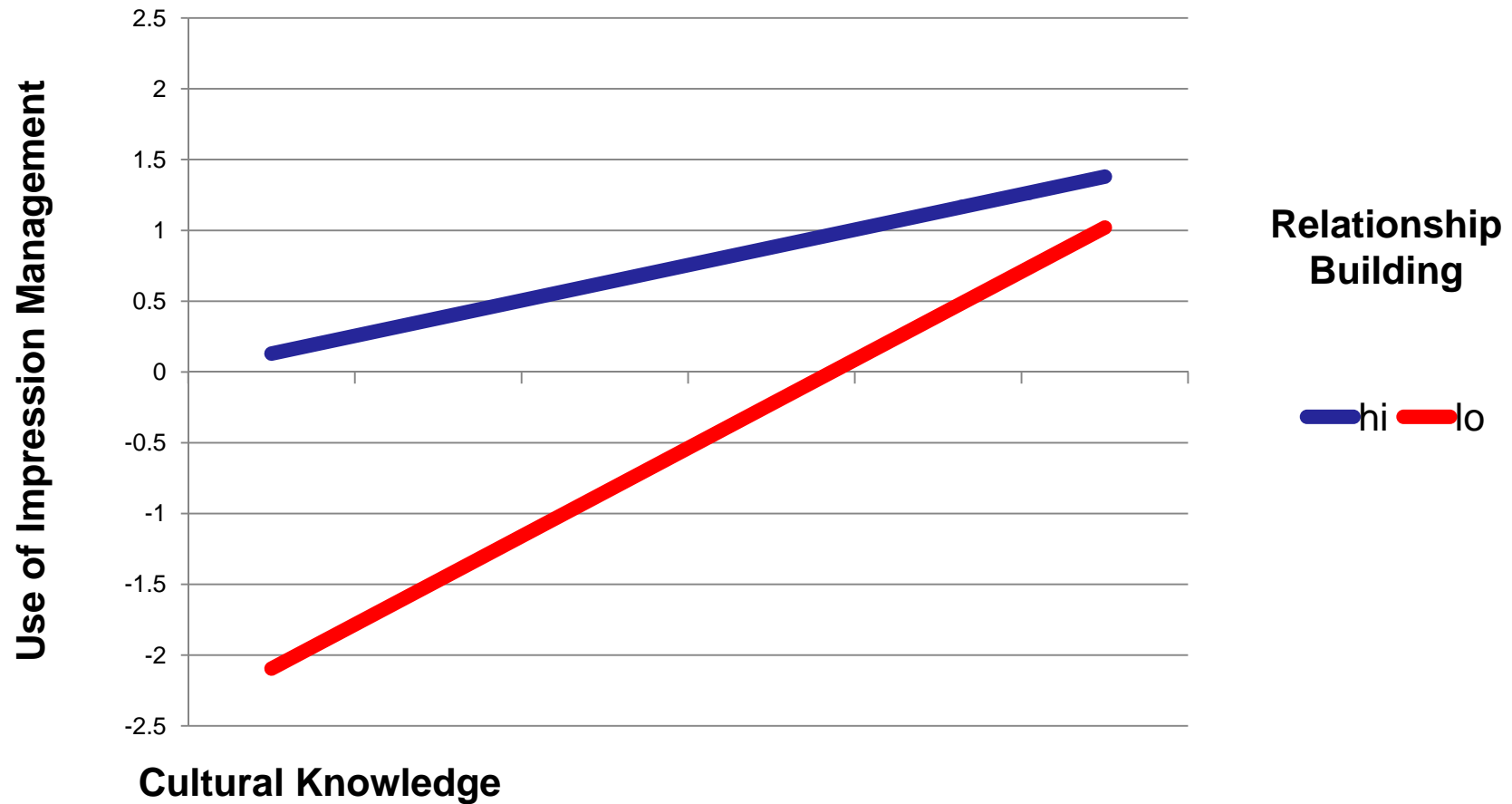
Predicting Impression Management



<i>Model</i>	<i>Variable</i>	β	R^2	ΔR^2
1	<i>Interact with CP</i>	<i>.43**</i>	<i>.187**</i>	<i>--</i>
2	<i>Interact with CP</i>	<i>.28**</i>	<i>.478**</i>	<i>.29**</i>
	<i>Use Cultural Knowledge</i>	<i>.56**</i>		
3	<i>Interact with CP</i>	<i>.12**</i>	<i>.665**</i>	<i>.19**</i>
	<i>Use Cultural Knowledge</i>	<i>.23**</i>		
	<i>Relationship Building</i>	<i>.60**</i>		
4	<i>Interact with CP</i>	<i>.11**</i>	<i>.673**</i>	<i>.01**</i>
	<i>Use Cultural Knowledge</i>	<i>.25**</i>		
	<i>Relationship Building</i>	<i>.55**</i>		
	<i>CK x RB Interaction</i>	<i>-.10**</i>		



Using Cultural Knowledge X Relationship Building Interaction





Predicting Proactive Tactics



- Proactive tactics serve a different purpose than impression management
 - Proactive tactics are used to persuade the target to do a specific thing
 - Maintaining and building a relationship may or may not be an important consideration when trying to persuade a target in the short-term
 - But would still think some interpersonal skill would be required, at least in the short term
 - Need to know about the culture in order to persuade someone effectively
- Does relationship building and the application of cultural knowledge have a similar relationship to proactive tactics as they do with impression management?
- A proactive tactics scale was computed by converting the rational persuasion, soft tactics, and hard tactics scales to z-scores and calculating the mean



Predicting Proactive Tactics



<i>Model</i>	<i>Variable</i>	β	R^2	ΔR^2
1	<i>Interact with CP</i>	<i>.32**</i>	<i>.100**</i>	<i>--</i>
2	<i>Interact with CP</i>	<i>.15**</i>	<i>.458**</i>	<i>.358**</i>
	<i>Use Cultural Knowledge</i>	<i>.62**</i>		
3	<i>Interact with CP</i>	<i>.13**</i>	<i>.462**</i>	<i>.004*</i>
	<i>Use Cultural Knowledge</i>	<i>.57**</i>		
	<i>Relationship Building</i>	<i>.09*</i>		
4	<i>Interact with CP</i>	<i>.12**</i>	<i>.464**</i>	<i>.002</i>
	<i>Use Cultural Knowledge</i>	<i>.58**</i>		
	<i>Relationship Building</i>	<i>.06</i>		
	<i>CK x RB Interaction</i>	<i>-.05</i>		



Predicting Proactive Tactics



- Relationship building offers very little above and beyond the application of cultural knowledge in the prediction of proactive tactics ($\Delta R^2 = .004$)
 - Use Cultural Knowledge: $\beta = .57$ Relationship Building: $\beta = .09$
- Compare this with the prediction of impression management tactics
 - Interaction between cultural knowledge and relationship building
 - Use Cultural Knowledge: $\beta = .25$ Relationship Building: $\beta = .55$
- Potential implication is that, in cross-cultural interactions, the roles of cultural knowledge and relationship building might vary depending on the type of influence strategy desired



Relating Influence to Counterpart Receptivity



- Part of the advisor mission is to guide and influence counterparts to stand up professional military and police forces
 - Certain influence strategies might facilitate how willing counterparts are to listen to advisors
 - Alternatively, the more receptive counterparts are, the more likely advisors might be to use certain strategies
- Do advisors who report having more receptive counterparts use impression management and proactive tactics with different frequency than do advisors who report having less receptive counterparts?
- The correlational nature of this study does not allow us to look at the causal direction between influence strategy and the counterpart's willingness to listen to advice, but it could help highlight directions for future research



Relating Influence to Counterpart Receptivity



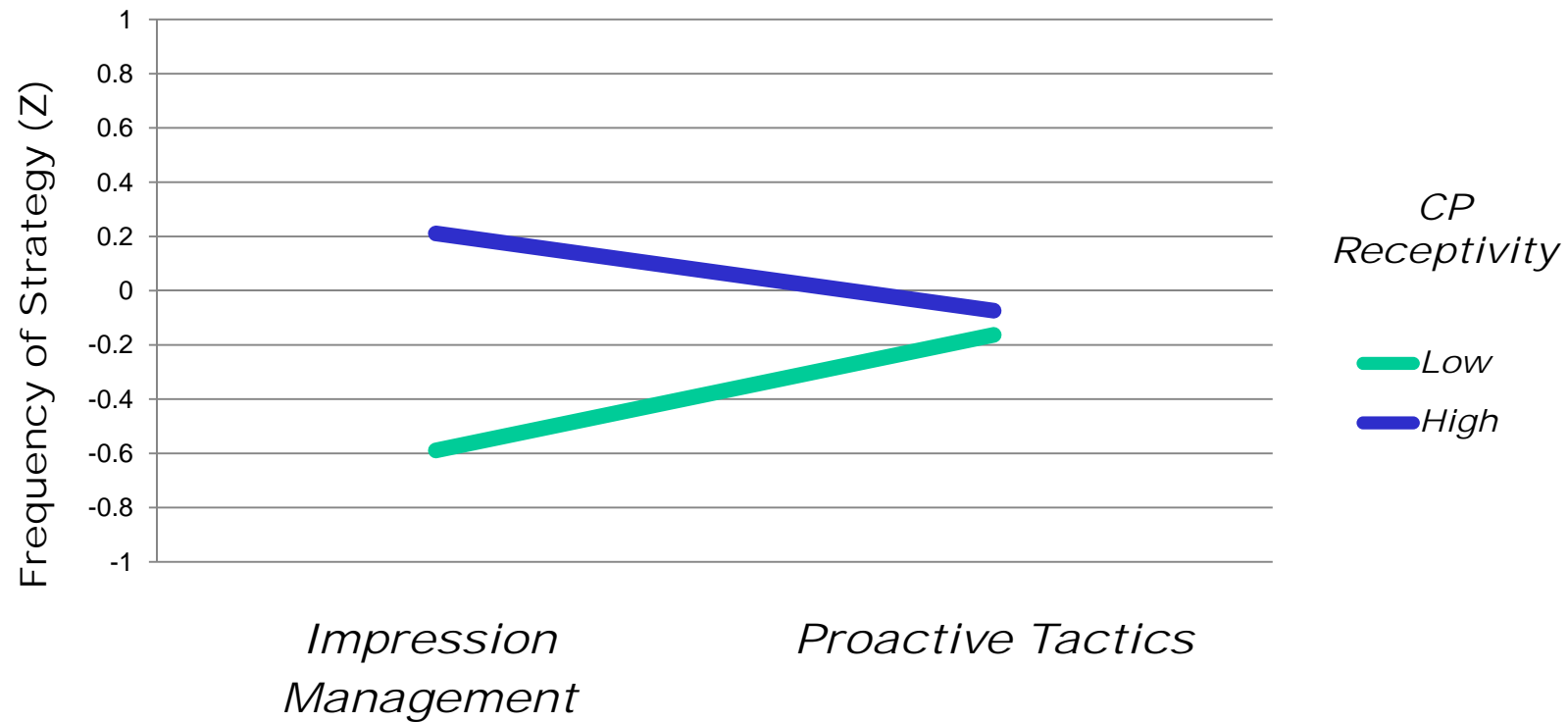
- Created two groups
 - 68 advisors who indicated that their counterparts were highly receptive (ratings were 1SD over the mean counterpart receptivity score)
 - 61 advisors who provided the lowest counterpart receptivity ratings (ratings were 1SD below the mean counterpart receptivity score)
- Conducted a profile analysis and controlled for the frequency with which the advisor reported interacting with the counterpart



Influence Strategy Profile



- Profile analysis indicated an interaction between type of strategy and group, $F(1, 127) = 15.77, p < .0001$





Discussion



- Impression management is important to advisor effectiveness, and potentially more than the proactive tactics we use to typically understand and train influence
 - Indicated by advisor ratings across countries of deployment
 - Impression management seems to differentiate between those reporting receptive counterparts and those having less receptive counterparts
 - Conversely, proactive tactics seem to be demonstrated with the same frequency
- Impression management does not have to be construed as an aberrant self-promoting behavior, but can serve the interests of the organization when the mission/greater good is placed first
 - Ammeter et al. (2002) noted that impression management could serve a positive function



Discussion Continued



- Advisors who engage in both relationship building and application of what they know about the culture are the ones who are most likely to demonstrate impression management strategies
 - This is after controlling for the effect of how frequently an advisor interacts with a counterpart
- Relationship building appears to have less of an association with proactive tactics, but appears fairly important in impression management
- Using cultural knowledge appears to be associated with the demonstration of both impression management and proactive tactics



Implications for Practice



- Selection
 - Both relationship building activities and the use of cultural knowledge predict the occurrence of impression management strategies
 - Could we select for those high on interpersonal skills, cultural knowledge and awareness, and potential personality variables and pick individuals most likely to succeed on an advisor team?
- Training
 - Current training focuses on proactive tactics
 - Additional instruction should target impression management strategies, particularly role modeling
 - Should also focus on developmental interventions that target interpersonal skills and knowledge of the culture because this will increase the odds of more effective relationship building activities and use of cultural knowledge



Cautions and Future Research



- Need to replicate findings with something other than self-report
 - Need to look at the effectiveness of the strategies using objective and external criteria
 - Looked at frequency of behaviors, not whether those behaviors were performed well
- Need to explore the conditions under which certain strategies are more effective than others
- Experimental and alternative designs are required to explore causal relationships between relationship building, cultural knowledge, influence, and the willingness of a counterpart to accept advice
- Need to examine the use of impression management and proactive tactics in conjunction with one another
 - Impression management and proactive tactics are not mutually exclusive



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QUESTIONS?

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